

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER
AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 94

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be withdrawn as a cosponsor from House Resolution 94.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINDER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 25, 1995

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon on Monday, September 25, 1995.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT FROM MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 1995 TO WEDNESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 27, 1995

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns Monday, September 25, it adjourn to meet at noon on Wednesday, September 27, 1995.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINDER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GIBBONS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GIBBONS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HELPING VICTIMS OF
HEMOPHILIA-ASSOCIATED AIDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, for 6 years I and my staff have worked with victims of hemophilia-associated AIDS seeking justice and assistance from the Federal Government. Because hemophiliacs rely on blood-clotting products made from human blood, they are at an enormous risk of contracting blood-borne diseases. In the 1980's, tragedy struck this community, and approximately 8,000 Americans—or one-half of all hemophiliacs in this country—became infected with the deadly virus that causes AIDS. This tragedy occurred in part because the Federal Government failed to fulfill its unique responsibility for regulating the safety of blood products and for taking aggressive action to prevent the spread, through blood products, of the HIV virus. That conclusion was strongly supported in a recent report of the Institute of Medicine, a highly respected, objective, scientific analysis arm of the National Academy of Sciences. This report has confirmed my belief that the Federal Government shares the responsibility for what happened, since the regulatory system failed to respond to the clear early warning signs of blood-borne AIDS. As a result, in my view the Federal Government has a clear and compelling obligation to provide compassionate assistance to the victims of what has been called the worst medical tragedy in modern history. I have introduced legislation, called the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act, to establish a compensation program that would allow the Government to own up to its obligation. This bill is named for a 15-year-old Florida boy who died in December 1992, and whose family today still suffers from his loss and the ongoing illnesses of Ricky's two brothers, who are also HIV positive hemophiliacs. The Ricky Ray bill, which carries more than 125 bipartisan cosponsors, establishes a trust fund from which eligible victims could each claim \$125,000. The legislation specifies that the trust fund, once authorized, would sunset after 5 years and would be capped at a total of \$1 billion, with the funds to come from the annual appropriation process. Some people have asked, what makes these victims special? What is it about this tragedy that moves us to provide Government compensation?

What is unique about the victims of hemophilia-associated AIDS? In my view, the record is clear: Government has established a unique regulatory scheme for blood products, overseeing their safety under the auspices of both the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the Biologics Act. In making its regulatory decisions about the safety of blood products, the FDA, until just recently, relied heavily on advice from an advisory panel comprised in large part of people with expertise from the blood banking industry itself. In addition, we have a national blood policy, established in 1974, that outlines our commitment to blood and blood products as a national resource. And blood

products are exempted from national product liability legislation, fostering the development of a unique legal framework in which blood products are shielded from normal product liability standards under nearly all State laws.

Mr. Speaker, this is a brief outline of why I believe a strong case can be made that this situation—in which we have about one death every day of a hemophiliac with AIDS—is unique and requires a special Federal response. I understand that the Federal Government cannot become involved in every tragic case that occurs in this country. But this case is unique—and the Federal Government has a unique responsibility for what went wrong. I urge my colleagues to look at H.R. 1023—and I again ask that our Judiciary Committee schedule hearings to consider the complex regulatory, legal, and ethical questions this tragedy raises.

Mr. Speaker, it is not going to go away. Every day one more person is going to die tragically, and it is partially our fault. We need to deal with it.

HEARINGS ARE NEEDED ON
MEDICARE REFORM PROPOSALS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I have come to the floor to talk a bit about what my biggest fear as a Member has always been, and that has been not being prepared.

Mr. Speaker, it is so difficult to try very hard to find out what is going on and to be prepared. I was trained as an attorney, and I learned you never step into a courtroom, you never do anything without being prepared.

Well, let me tell my colleagues in this Medicare-Medicaid debate, there is no way anyone can be prepared. Here we are on the eve of the 1 day of hearings that they are going to grant on Medicare, and there is still no bill. There is still no bill.

So, if we wanted to go to those hearings tomorrow and be prepared, I do not know how we would do it. Today, they released 60 pages of conceptual language, but there are no numbers. How do we know if they add up or do not add up? We do not know what the Congressional Budget Office is saying.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this is playing very fast and loose and I am very troubled, because if I were an average American watching this and watched the barbs being traded back and forth across the aisle, they are filled with both bravado and bluster and everything else. But the bottom line is there is no there there. They do not have a real bill there.

The same thing has happened with Medicaid. On Medicaid we did not have even 1 day of hearings. They just moved immediately into a markup. We are beginning to find out what is coming out of that markup, which is really

fairly frightening. If we look at Medicaid, there are 18 million children that rely on Medicaid for their health care. There are 6 million disabled relying on Medicaid for their health care. Overall, there are 36 million Americans relying on Medicaid for health care.

Now, the numbers. It looks like they are going to cut my State of Colorado back by about a third. So what happens? How do you treat two-thirds of a child? How do you treat two-thirds of a disabled person? Where do you pick up the difference? How do you do this?

Well, there were no hearings. People from my area were not allowed to come forward. We had many people who would like to and, of course, we are going to see the same act tomorrow when it comes to Medicare.

When we look at Medicare, there are 37 million Americans that are affected by Medicare. Now, when I add 36 million for Medicaid and 37 million for Medicare, I end up with 73 million Americans. And we are holding the future of their health care in our hands as legislators.

Mr. Speaker, I find it really outrageous, as we hold the future of their health care in our hands, that we do not have a real bill; that we are not having real hearings; that we are not having people with the expertise in delivering this care looking at real bills to find out if they will really work.

Mr. Speaker, I would never say that I totally understand how this whole thing works. None of us can possibly understand every specialty that we have to deal with. That is what hearings are about. Otherwise, we could save a lot of money and never have hearings on anything.

So 73 million people, as I add these two numbers together, have got to be wondering what is happening. And I must say, I am very frustrated that tomorrow our side of the aisle has got to start alternative hearings out in the yard somewhere, and hope it does not rain, because we have not been able to get even a room assignment to do this.

Now, really, I think when we look at all the other things this body has had time to do, when we look at something this serious, we really should be going in with many more facts.

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Yes, I have heard people on that side saying, "You are just trying to do Medicare." We do not want to do Medicare. But you start being very scared if nobody gives you the details. The devil is always in the details. You, also, worry very much about what the end result is going to be.

Whenever you ask a question, someone says, "Well, what is your plan?" The President put our plan out there. The people know what our plan is.

Then the other side continually says, "We are just trying to save it." Our question is: Maybe they are trying to kill it. But if it is so harmless, if they have found this wonderful way they are going to save all of this money without

paying, why are they holding it? I would think the hearings this side of the aisle has been asking for and the 201 Members of this body have asked for, I would think they would love those hearings because people will be coming and saying, "Hosanna, how wonderful that they got all of this together."

So I really hope there is more than the 1 day of hearings, and I think it is a very sad day when we are forced to go outdoors and have alternative hearings without even a real bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LINDER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. BURTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE ISTOOK AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. SKAGGS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, the so-called Istook amendment to restrict political activities by people and organizations getting any kind of funding or thing of value from the Federal Government seems to be having more lives than the proverbial cat.

The House, of course, passed it as a rider to the Labor-Health appropriations bill. Now it is hanging up the House-Senate conference committee as a proposed rider to the Treasury-Postal Service appropriations.

Let me just say to the members of the conference committee, please, read the text of this dog. Do not believe the descriptions of the amendment by its supporters. It does not just apply, as they would have you believe, to lobbyists or to nonprofits or, for that matter, to the so-called special interests. With only a very few exceptions, it regulates every person and every organization in this country that gets not only funds but anything of value from the Federal Government.

Let us just look at one small set of people and organizations that would be caught up in this Orwellian net of political regulation, and they are the people receiving water from just one Federal water project, the Bureau of Reclamation's Colorado Big Thompson water project.

To begin with, those of us in the West know full well irrigation water is a thing of value. We can assure you of that. Looking at the text of the Istook amendment, the legal counsel for the water conservancy district, which distributes this water, has concluded that everybody getting water from the Colorado Big Thompson water project would be regulated under the Istook amendment.

Here is a partial list of all the people that would be affected by the Istook amendment and their political activities in one part of the State of Colorado, 2,000 individuals and organizations, mostly farmers and ranchers, individuals from Larry Accord to Henry Zimmerman, some companies, Anderson Farms, Boulder Valley Farms, Montford of Colorado, Reynolds Cattle Co. Besides farmers and ranchers, others would be regulated, too, because they receive water from this project: Ames Junior College, the Archdiocese of Denver, Boulder Country Club, Eastman Kodak, First Christian Church, IBM, Hewlett-Packard all get irrigation water from this Bureau of Reclamation project, and because of the Istook amendment, would all have their so-called political advocacy activities regulated according to the bill.

In addition, we could go on into other categories of persons affected that the sponsors of this incredible provision do not want you to know about, whether it is pregnant and nursing mothers getting WIC vouchers, disaster victims getting emergency assistance, students getting subsidized school lunches, whatever. What happens to all of these people? They face several major restrictions on how they can participate in the public life of their Nation and of their communities. So-called political advocacy activities would be regulated, restricted and, in many cases, prohibited including, depending upon how this kicks in, writing to your State legislator, school board member, applying for a building permit, because you are trying to influence a government decision, appealing the tax assessment on your home, writing a letter to the editor of your local paper, running for office or supporting someone who does. And beyond those things, it also attempts to regulate essentially derivative political activities, doing business with anybody or making a contribution to anybody who has exceeded the limits on political advocacy in this awfully ill-conceived proposal.

This might be described as a kind of secondary boycott requirement.

For example, hiring somebody who has been especially politically active would be prohibited to these people getting irrigation water. Can you believe that? Or buying something from a company that has just spent over 15 percent of its budget on "political advocacy," as might well happen in a year and which they had to get a new building permit and go through a zoning change. These are the kind of restrictions that would be applied not only to individuals but to family farms like the Leister family farm that gets their irrigation water, or to big companies like IBM.

What happens to them? Chilling, chilling requirements. They are barred from getting any kind of Federal Government support or assistance if in any of the previous 5 years they have spent more than 5 percent of their own private funds engaging in an incredibly